



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE

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MEDIA ADVISORY

Texas State Veterans Cemeteries to celebrate Memorial Day with meaning

Abilene, Corpus Christi, Killeen, Mission to honor heroes on Monday with guest speakers, military salutes

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 22, 2014

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AUSTIN, Texas — Keeping with the true meaning of the holiday, the four Texas State Veterans Cemeteries will host Memorial Day programs on Monday, May 26.

The events, all of which are open to the public, will feature several veterans organizations from the area and elected officials, as well as military salutes such as color guards, wreath-laying (Corpus Christi), laser-etched memorials to those lost in Iraq and Afghanistan (Killeen) and even an antique aircraft fly-over (Abilene).

"We invite the public to attend these memorial tributes to our fallen heroes," said Bill McLemore, Deputy Commissioner for the Texas Veterans Land Board, which oversees the Texas State Veterans Cemeteries. "It's the least we can do for those who gave of themselves to preserve the freedoms we enjoy."

ABILENE

The Texas State Veterans Cemetery at Abilene will host a Memorial Day program from 11 a.m. to noon on Monday, May 26.

The Big Country Commemorative Air Force squadron will perform several fly-overs during the ceremony, accompanied by the Abilene Community Band and an honor guard from Dyess Air Force Base posting the colors.

Abilene Mayor Norm Archibald, Taylor County Judge Downing Boles, and Jones County Judge Dale Spurgeon are scheduled to speak.

The Texas State Veterans Cemetery at Abilene, located on 63 acres near Lake Fort Phantom Hill (7457 West Lake Road, Abilene), is one of four Texas State Veterans Cemeteries operated by the Texas VLB.

CORPUS CHRISTI

The Coastal Bend Texas State Veterans Cemetery in Corpus Christi will host a Memorial Day program from 1 to 2 p.m. on Monday, May 26.

The ceremony is sponsored by the Veterans Band of Corpus Christi, Texas. Speakers will include retired Navy Capt. Dr. Ernest Philips, Director of the Coastal Bend State Veterans Cemetery, Jose Armijo, and the Honorable County Judge Loyd Neal, a retired Army Colonel.

Among those assisting this year's program are: Veterans of Foreign Wars Posts 2397, 3837, and 8932; the Corpus Christi Mayor's Committee for Veterans Affairs; Military Order of the Purple Heart Chapter 598, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 910, American Legion Posts 28 and 365, Disabled American Veterans Post 150, USMC League Coastal Bend Chapter, Catholic War Veterans, Patriot Guard Riders, and Combat Motorcycle Veterans.

Wreaths will be laid on the graves. A reception will follow the ceremony at VFW Post 3837, 12030 Leopard Street, in Corpus Christi.

The Coastal Bend State Veterans Cemetery in Corpus Christi, located on the southeast corner of Carbon Plant Road and IH-37 (9974 IH-37 Access Road, Corpus Christi), is one of four Texas State Veterans Cemeteries operated by the Texas VLB.

KILLEEN

The Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery will host its Memorial Day program from 10 to 11:30 a.m. on Monday, May 26. On the guest list is U.S. Rep. Roger Williams.

Each Memorial Day, a new monument is dedicated at the cemetery. The Central Texas Fallen Heroes Foundation will be on hand to dedicate the eighth of such memorials to honor the fallen soldiers of Central Texas who have died since 2003 supporting operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The newest memorial consists of black granite stones, each representing a particular year. One side of each seven foot tall black granite monument has the names of soldiers who died during that year. The reverse side of the stone memorializes each of those soldiers with a photo laser-etched into the granite.

The Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery, located off State Highway 195 near Fort Hood (11463 State Highway 195, Killeen), is one of four Texas State Veterans Cemeteries operated by the Texas VLB.

MISSION

The Rio Grande Valley Texas State Veterans Cemetery will host its Memorial Day program from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Monday, May 26.

The ceremony will be conducted by VFW Post 8788 out of McAllen. Tribute will also be paid to former Prisoners of War, those who are currently still Missing In Action, and the families of those who have lost their lives defending freedom.

The Rio Grande Valley Texas State Veterans Cemetery, located on 75 acres near the Seven Oaks Golf and Country Club in Mission, is one of four Texas State Veterans Cemeteries operated by the Texas VLB. It is located at 2520 S. Inspiration Road (2.5 miles south of the U.S. Hwy. 83 exit), in Mission.

For more information on the Texas State Veterans Cemeteries call 1-800-252-VETS (8387) or visit www.texasveterans.com.

WHO: Veterans service organizations, elected officials and the general public

WHAT: Memorial Day programs

WHEN: Memorial Day (see above for specific times)

WHERE: All four Texas State Veterans Cemeteries (see above for specific locations)

WHY: To honor the memory of our departed military heroes

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